

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AHEMBASSY JIDDA 1473

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

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TAGS: PFOR PINT SY

SUBJ: SYRIAN MEDIA SUMMARY FOR MAY 18, 1977

SUMMARY: IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO AGREEMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION
LEBANESE ARMY AGAIN OCCUPYING CENTER STAGE IN MEDIA. CON-
DITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO AGREEMENT SAID TO BE "VIABLE."
OIL-RICH ARAB STATES EDITORIALY EXHORTED TO UNDERTAKE
"MARSHALL PLAN" FOR LEBANON. QADDOUMI QUOTED ON FRONT PAGE
AS SAYING PLO WOULD ACCEPT INVITATION TO GENEVA AND
PALESTINIANS READY TO LIVE WITH ISRAELIS. EDITORIAL IN
AL-BAATH CALLED FOR ARAB MILITARY PREPAREDNESS TO
ACCOMPANY DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS. END SUMMARY.

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1. SEVERAL DAILIES LED WITH STORIES ON LEBANON WHILE
TISHRIIN BANNERED: "EXCLUSIVE TISHRIIN DISPATCH FROM
GENEVA: VANCE AND GROMYKO DISCUSS MIDEAST QUESTION.
SYRIA'S POSITION IS CRUCIAL FACTOR IN FUTURE DEVELOPMENT
OF AREA."

2. STORY ON LEBANON DEALT WITH NOW FAMILIAR THEMES OF NEED

TO IMPLEMENT CAIRO AGREEMENT AND REBUILD LEBANESE ARMY. TONE WAS MORE DIRECT THAN RECENT ARTICLES. ARTICLE NOTED SARKIS CONCENTRATING ON SOUTH LEBANON AND CREATING LEBANESE FORCE TO MAINTAIN SECURITY. SARKIS REPORTED TO HAVE MET WITH COMMAND OF THE LEBANESE ARMY TO STUDY REPORT CONCERNED WITH ARMY'S RECONSTRUCTION. ARTICLE ASSERTED THAT MOST OF THE OFFICERS WHO HAD HANDED IN THEIR RESIGNATIONS HAD NOT TAKEN PART IN THE FIGHTING ON ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER. IT POINTED OUT THAT LAW INTENDED TO WEED OUT OFFICERS WHO HAD PARTICIPATED IAS PARTISANS IN THE FIGHTING AND NOTED LEBANESE GOVERNMENT ENTITLED TO TURN DOWN RESIGNATIONS OR APPOINT THOSE RESIGNING TO CIVILIAN POSITIONS, WHILE DISMISSING ANY OFFICER IT DEEMED MISLED.

3. TURNING TO CAIRO AGREEMENT, ARTICLE REPORTED THAT MAJOR EFFORT BEING MADE TO FIND FORMULA SATISFACTORY TO BOTH LEBANESE AND PALESTINIANS WHICH WOULD INSURE ADEQUATE PROTECTION FOR TH CAMPS. LEBANESE VIEWPOINT SAID BASED ON POSSIBILITY OF ADF PROVIDING PROTECTION FOR CAMPS UNTIL LEBANESE ARMY ABLE ASSUME THIS FUNCTION. FRANJIEH SAID TO HAVE DECLARED THAT KHADDAM'S RECENT STATEMENT (IN KUWAIT) ON NEED FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF CARIO AGREEMENT HAD COME AS NO SURPRISE BECAUSE "AL-ASSAD PERSONALLY CONCERNED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAIRO AGREEMENT WHICH GUARANTEES EVERYBODY'S SAFETY."

5. EDITORIAL IN THAWRA ALSO DEALT WITH CAIRO AGREEMENT. IT SAID AGREEMENT MORE VIABLE THAN EVER "SINCE CURRENT UNCLASSIFIED

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CONDITIONS IN LEBANON ARE IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, CONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLED FORMULAS CONTAINED IN THE AGREEMENT." IT WEIGHED IN WITH OPINION THAT RECONSTRUCTION OF LEBANESE ARMY "COULD NOT TAKE ANY MORE DELAY", SINCE ITS ABSENCE AS STRONG EFFECTIVE FORCE WAS ONE OF PRINCIPLE CAUSES OF LEBANON'S ERUPTION. IT VIGOROUSLY CALLED UPON OIL-RICH ARAB STATES TO FINANCE RECONSTRUCTION OF ARMY AND LEBANON ALONG LINES OF POST-WORLD WAR II MARSHALL PLAN. IT CONCLUDED THAT LEBANON'S RECONSTRUCTION WAS COLLECTIVE ARAB RESPONSIBILITY.

6. AL-BAATH CARRIED FRONT PAGE SANA REPORT DATELINED GENEVA AND CAPTIONED: "QADDOUMI: THE PLO WILL ATTEND GENEVA IF INVITED. WE ARE READY TO LIVE WITH THE JEWS." ARTICLE READ IN SUMMARY: "QADDOUMI ANNOUNCED THAT PLO WOULD ATTEND GENEVA CONFERENCE IF IT RECEIVED INVITATION FROM CO-CHAIRMAN, USSR AND USA. ACCORDING TO AFP, QADDOUMI DID NOT INSIST ON

INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN DELEGATION;
HE SAID THIS WAS INTERNAL ARAB MATTER. AGENCY QUOTED
QADDOUMI WHO WAS TALKING TO SWISS RADIO AND
TELEVISION AS SAYING THAT WE ARE READY TO BE FLEXIBLE AND
READY TO LIVE WITH THE JEWS. WHEN ASKED WHETHER HE MEANT
'JEWS' OR 'ISRAELIS', QADDOUMI REPLIED, (ISRAELIS...
WE ARE READY TO DEAL WITH THEM ON THE BASIS OF EQUALITY
AS PEOPLE BUT AS LONG AS ISRAEL PERSISTS IN AN EXPANSIONIST,
AGGRESSIVE POLITICAL COURSE, COOPERATION WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE.
QADDOUMI SAID THAT THE US GOVERNMENT WAS PLAYING WITH WORDS
WHEN IT TALKED ABOUT THE RIGHT OF PALESTINIANS TO HAVE
A NATIONAL HOMELAND AND ADDED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER
SHOULD TALK ABOUT A STATE FOR THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE RATHER
THAN A HOMELAND FOR THE PALESTINIAN REFUGEES."

7. EDITORIAL BY AMID AL-KHULI IN AL-BAATH REMINDED
READERS THAT DIPLOMACY AND DIALOGUE CANNOT SUBSTITUTE FOR
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MILITARY PREPAREDNESS NOR CAN MILITARY MEANS BE RULED OUT
FOR ATTAINMENT OF JUST PEACE. HE SAID GENEVA WAS NOT AN
END IN ITSELF BUT MERELY "ONE CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH
SYRIA MOVING TO ACHIEVE ITS NATIONAL GOALS." HE CONCLUDED
THAT "DIALOGUE OF STRENGTH IS MORE CONCLUSIVE THAN STRENGTH
OF DIALOGUE."

8. COMMENT: PROMINENCE GIVEN TO QADDOUMI'S REMARKS
AND EMPHASIS ON THEIR MODERATE ASPECTS SUGGEST SYRIANS
TRYING TO PORTRAY
PLO AS INCREASINGLY MODERATE TOWARD
PEACE PROCESS AND DEALING WITH ISRAEL.
MURPHY

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